

CURRENT INTELLIGENCE WEEKLY REVIEW

23 December 1959

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THE CUBAN SITUATION

The small anti-US clique around Fidel Castro is consolidating its control of important groups. Anti-Communist labor leaders who defied him during the recent Cuban Workers' Confederation Congress

are rapidly and ruthlessly being purged, probably on orders from his brother Raul. Some are under such strong attack that they have sought asylum in foreign embassies.

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The Cuban Medical Association, whose strong Havana branch defeated a revolutionary slate of officers in elections on 1 December, elected a protégé of pro-Communist "Che" Guevara as president on 20 December, reportedly after heavy pressure from the government.

The regime's most important entity, the National Agrarian Reform Institute, has extended its control over production and marketing of an increasing number of commodities, including the sale of all minerals from Oriente Province, center of Cuba's considerable mineral wealth.

Meanwhile, in furtherance of its proclaimed neutralist foreign policy, the Castro government established diplomatic relations with Ghana and Tunisia on 21 December and announced plans for relations with 16 other Afro-Asian countries. This is in preparation for the congress of underdeveloped nations which Foreign Minister Roa recently announced would be held in Havana in mid-1960. Cuba apparently hopes by these actions to assert its leadership of the "third position" in Latin America and to attract other countries to the Cuban stand in defiance of the United

States and the Organization of American States.

Opposition to Castro remains disunited and ill defined, but he apparently is obsessed by the desire to eliminate every vestige of criticism. His frequent inflammatory speeches of the past fortnight have stressed the class struggle--a concept he previously specifically rejected --and he has implied that the trained professional class lacks true devotion to the revolution. He exhorted the masses to ferret out and report anyone suspected of impeding the revolutionary program. On 22 December the cabinet authorized the confiscation of property belonging to anyone in Cuba or abroad who is convicted of counterrevolutionary activities, a category constantly broadened by Castro's definitions.

These efforts to arouse Cuban suspicions and emotions in defense of the revolution give substance to reports that the government plans to provoke mass demonstrations and possibly mob action against alleged counterrevolutionaries. Such demonstrations would probably have a strongly anti-US tone.

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